Hello my name is Lauren and I am an Independent Living facilitator here at the Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living. Today I’m going to be demonstrating the Jaws software. Jaws is a screen reading software for people who are usually completely blind. You don’t really need any visual aspects at all to use Jaws. It’s going to read out everything audible so all you need is a keyboard, a monitor, a Ckeyunit and that’s all you need for Jaws to operate.

It will basically reformat documents and websites into almost a list format so you can tab through links and find what it is you’re looking for. And you can control the speech rate and the speech voice, so if you want something that sounds more human like or if you prefer a robotic sort of sound you can choose between those. And the speech rate you can change also, so if you want to skim through things as quickly as possible just like anyone else would skim down a web page you can do that as well. So this is a word document that we’ve brought up and we are going to ask it to read parts of it to us. So the recommendation is “alt” and then the “down” arrow (computer is reading). So it will keep reading. I hit the control key again to ask it to stop talking.

There is another option you can use. You can use Insert 5 and it will tell you the words and if you hit 5 twice (computer spelling) it will spell it for you. You can arrow through the document, through the lines just by arrowing up and down the text. (Computer talking) so there is a whole slew of commands that you can give Jaws to ask it to read: line by line, word by word, with punctuation, without punctuation depending on how much detail you are looking for. And of course I said before you can slow down reading speech rate so if this is to fast you can slow it down.

Or if you are trying to take notes on a document as you are going you can do that as well. So next we are going to pull up an internet explorer page and when the webpage comes up Jaws is going to give you some initial information. It will tell you how many links, any subtitles and headings that are on the page and that all depends on how the maker of the website has formatted the webpage. Occasionally there are some webpages that are accessible for screen reader users and there might be a button at the top part of the page that you can click on that says for screen reader users, and it will basically reformat the page so it’s more accessible and more easily read by something like Jaws.

So we are going to bring up an internet explorer. We are going to hit the windows key again (computer talking) type I for internet explorer. (Computer talking) Ok so this one is actually in forms mode and the voice you noticed the voice changed that’s because it is trying to let you differentiate between the different heads and links on the page. So we are going to go to a
different website. So we hit control to ask it to stop talking. Jaws will read a website just like it will read a word document and you can use the same commands to arrow through line by line, or word by word, or letter by letter through the text on the webpage. Right now we are arrowing (computer talking) letter by letter, and you noticed that there was an emphasis placed on the B, V, C, I and L that’s because all of those letters are in caps. So it does give you a little bit a different inflection so you can notice when something is capitalized. (Computer talking) so we’re arrowing down line by line (computer still talking) and I asked it to spell it again using the insert 5 5, so those are a couple of different features that Jaws uses to navigate through the webpages.